

Ski & Snowboard Safety

Before Hitting the Slopes

- ❄ **Get in shape.** Don't try to ski yourself into shape. You'll enjoy skiing more if you're physically fit.
- ❄ **Buy proper equipment.** Be sure to have your ski or snowboard bindings adjusted correctly at a local ski shop. You can rent good ski or snowboarding equipment at resorts.
- ❄ **Wear a Helmet & look like a Pro!**
- ❄ When buying skiwear, look for fabric that is **water- and wind-resistant**. Look for wind flaps to shield zippers, snug cuffs at wrists and ankles, collars that can be snuggled up to the chin and drawstrings that can be adjusted for comfort and keep wind out. Be sure to buy quality clothing and products.
- ❄ **Dress in layers.** Layering allows you to accommodate your body's constantly changing temperature. For example, dress in polypropylene underwear (top and bottoms), which feels good next to the skin, dries quickly, absorbs sweat and keeps you warm. Wear a turtleneck, sweater and jacket.
- ❄ **Be prepared.** Bring a headband or hat with you to the slopes, 60 percent of heat-loss is through the head. Wear gloves or mittens (mittens are better for those susceptible to cold hands).
- ❄ **Wear sun protection.** The sun reflects off the snow and is stronger than you think, even on cloudy days!
- ❄ Always wear **eye protection** such as sunglasses and goggles.

While on the Slopes

- ❄ **Take lessons** from a qualified instructor and with practice you can become a good skier or snowboarder
- ❄ The key to successful skiing/snowboarding is control, so **be aware of your ability**, the terrain and the skiers/snowboarders around you.
- ❄ **Be aware of the snow conditions.**
- ❄ Skiing and snowboarding require a mental and physical presence.
- ❄ If you are on a slope that is too steep, always leave your skis/snowboard on and side step down the slope.
- ❄ The all-important warm-up run prepares you mentally and physically for the day ahead. Drink plenty of water. Be careful not to become dehydrated.
- ❄ **Do not Drink Alcohol.** Skiing and snowboarding do not mix well with alcohol or drugs.
- ❄ **Know your limits.** Learn to ski and snowboard smoothly-and in control. Stop before you become fatigued.
- ❄ If you're tired, stop skiing-rest. Multi-passenger gondolas and high-speed chairlifts, provide you more time on the slopes so you have time to rest for another run after you rest.
- ❄ **Wear a helmet**-You will look like a pro & live to tell about it!

Your Responsibility Code

1. Always stay in control.
2. People ahead of you have the right of way.
3. Stop in a safe place for you and others.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging, look uphill and yield.
5. Use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
6. Observe signs and warnings, and keep off closed trails.
7. Know how to use the lifts safely.



Safe Driving in Snow & Mountains

Before Driving to the Mountains:

- Make sure your car brakes, windshield wipers, defroster, and heater are in excellent condition.
- Check car antifreeze. Add special solvent to your windshield washer reservoir to prevent freezing.
- Check your tires. Make sure they are properly inflated and the tread is in good condition.
- Always carry chains. Make sure they are the right size for your tires and in good condition. Keep a flashlight, flares, and chain repair links in car. Chains must be installed on the drive wheels. Make sure you know if your vehicle is front or rear wheel drive-if not sure, check your car's owner's manual.
- Other suggested items to carry in your car are an ice scraper or commercial de-icer, a broom for brushing snow off your car, a shovel to free you car if it is "snowed in", sand or burlap for traction if your wheels should become mired in snow and an old towel to clean your hands.
- Bring water, food, warm blankets and extra clothing-in case you are stopped in the snow for a long time.
- Check road conditions before leaving by calling the **Caltrans Highway Information Network (CHIN) phone number [800-427-7623]** for updated road conditions. If you have a cell phone, preload this number so you can call for updates. If it does not work in the mountains, use an emergency Call Box.
- Put an extra car key in your pocket so you do not get locked out of your car during chain installation.



Driving Tips:

- Allow time. Mountain trips take longer during winter than other times of the year, especially during snow or icy conditions.
- Keep gas tank full. Your car uses more gas driving uphill.
- Keep windshield and windows clear. You can stop at a safe turnout to use a snow brush or scraper. Use the car defroster and clean cloth to keep the windows free of fog.
- Slow down. Posted speed limits are safe in dry weather, but NOT in snow and ice-stopping distances are longer. Wear seat belt and leave more distance between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead.



Your visibility is limited-*drive slower!*

- Be observant. Visibility is often limited in winter making it hard to see snow plows or stopped cars.
- If broken down stay with vehicle. Conserve fuel & maintain warmth. Be aware of monoxide poisoning risk.

Chain Controls:

- You must stop and put chains on your tires when highway signs say "chains required" or you risk being fined by the California Highway Patrol or being told to turn around.
- When finding a place to put on chains, do not stop in a traffic lane where you will endanger yourself and block traffic wait until you can pull completely off the roadway to the right, usually at chain pullout locations.
- The speed limit when chains are required is 25 or 30 miles an hour.
- Chain Installers: If you use the services of a chain installer, always get a receipt and write the installer's badge number on it. Remember, chain installers are independent business people, not Caltrans employees. Chain installers are NOT allowed to sell or rent chains.
- During your return drive home, once you pass the "End of Chain Control" sign, you can pull off the road to a safe area to remove them.



Some material obtained from the California Department of Transportation

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